निर्यातों के मूल्य की तुलना में 2.88% कम है। अप्रैल—दिसम्बर, 1998 के दौरान 31582.86 मिलियन अमरीकी डालर के आयात करने का अनुमान था जो पिछले वर्ष की इसी अवधि में किए गए आयातों से 7.1% ज्यादा है। अप्रैल—दिसम्बर, 1998 की अवधि के दौरान व्यापार घाटा 7296 मिलियन अमरीकी डालर का था जो अप्रैल-दिसम्बर, 1997 के दौरान हुए 4478.3 मिलियन अमरीकी डालर के घाटे से अधिक है।

(ग) निर्यातों को बढ़ाने के लिए पहले कई उपाय किए गए हैं। इन उपायों में शामिल हैं:- निर्यात ऋण पर ब्याज की दर को 11% से घटाकर 9% करना, मौजूदा निर्यात प्रोत्साहन योजनाओं का सुदृढ़ीकरण, क्रियाविधियों का सरलीकरण और क्षेत्र विशिष्ट मुद्दों का निपटान। नीति की समीक्षा करना एक सतत प्रक्रिया है और यह व्यापार और औद्योगिक संस्थाओं के साथ बात-चीत के आधार पर की जाती है।

(घ) पिछले पांच वर्षों के निर्यात, आयात और व्यापार घाटे के आंकड़े निम्नानुसार हैं:-

(मिलियन अमरीकी डालर में)

वर्ष	निर्यात	आयात	व्यापार शेष
1994-95	26330	28654	-2324
1995-96	31797	36678	-4881
1996-97	33470	39132	-5662
1997-98	33980	40779	-6799
अप्रैल दिस०, 1998	24287	31583	-7296

Advisory Panel on International Trade

636. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up an advisory panel on international trade;

(b) if so, what are the names of the members of the panel; and

(c) what are the terms of reference thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) The Government have set up an Advisory Committee on International Trade under the Chairmanship of the Commerce Minister to, inter alia, advise the Government in the formulation of International Trade Policy.

(b) The Committee includes leading Industrialists, eminent experts on trade, environmentalists, consumer activists, academicians, former diplomats, representatives of Chambers of Commerce, Commerce Secretary and Special Secretary (Commerce) of GOI. The names of the Members of the Committee are:

Shri Rahul Bajaj,
CMD, Bajaj Auto Ltd.

Shri B.L. Das,
Former Ambassador to WTO.

Shri V.N. Dhoot,
Managing Director, Videocon International Ltd.

Shri Muchkund Dubey,
Former Foreign Secretary, Government of India.

Shri A.V. Ganesan,
Former Commerce Secretary, Government of India.

Shri Onkar Goswamy,
Senior Consultant, Confederation of Indian Industry, New Delhi.

Shri Abld Hussin,
Former Member, Planning Commission.

Shri Krishna Raj,
Editor, Economic & Political Weekly.

Shri Pradip S. Mehta,
Consumer Unity and Trust Society, Jaipur.

Dr. Amit Mitra,
Secretary General, Federation of Indian Chambers of commerce and Industry (FICCI).

Shri M. Narasimham,
Chairman, Administrative Staff College of India.

Shri N.R. Narayana Murty,
Chairman, Infosys Technoligies Ltd.

Dr. V.A. Pal Panandiker,
President & Professor, Center for Policy Research, New Delhi.

Dr. V.R. Panchmukhi,

Director, Research and Information Systems for Non-aligned and Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi.

Dr.Smt. Suman Sahay, Gene Campaign, New Delhi.

Shri K.B. Dadi Seth,
Chairman, Hindustan Lever Limited.

Shri P.P. Prabhu,
Commerce Secretary, GOI.

Shri N.N. Khanna,
Special Secretary (Commerce), GOI.

(c) The terms of reference of the Committee are: (i) to discuss periodically on going negotiations in multilateral trade bodies as well as other bodies in respect of trade related issues, with special emphasis on discussions and negotiations in the WTO; (ii) to review the status of legislation/administrative action on international obligations in the sphere of trade; (iii) to examine, from time to time, non-tariff barriers and tariff barriers against Indian goods and the action being pursued for dismantling such barriers; (iv) to recommend strategies for increasing market access for Indian goods; (v) to analyze the implications of various changes in the global commercial scenario with the intention of recommending suitable policy changes; & (vi) any other policy issues that the Minister of Commerce may wish to place for consideration.

Steps to Reduce Trade Deficit

637. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's trade deficit has touched/is likely to touch soon 5 per cent of the GDP; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/contemplated by Government to fight/overcome 1991 like situation?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) As per the provisional data received from the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (DGCIS), the trade deficit during April-December, 1998-99 was Rs. 30597 crores as against Central Statistical Organisation Gross Domestic Product quick estimates of Rs. 1426670 crores at current prices for the year 1997-98.

(b) Export promotion measures are continuously being taken by the Government through changes in policies and procedures for providing an export friendly environment, involvement of States in export promotion and consultation with trade and industry. A number of steps have been taken to promote exports which include lowering of interest rates on export credit, reduction in transaction cost through decentralisation and simplification of procedures and various other measures as enumerated in the Exim Policy. Steps have also been taken to promote exports through multilateral and bilateral initiatives, identification of thrust sectors and focus regions. The Government is also initiating action through several measures to facilitate investment in sectors with strong export potential, encourage diversification of India's export basket, address infrastructure shortcomings, improve export facilitation measures and thus enhance the overall competitiveness of Indian Exports. The Government is according high priority to exports and all necessary steps are being taken to put exports on high growth trajectory.